

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, PINT, ET, US

SUBJECT: SITUATION REPORT NO. 32, SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA

AS OF 0600 HOURS (EST) FEBRUARY 18, 1975

SMALL ARMS FIGHTING HAS BEGUN AGAIN WITHIN ASMARA IN RESPONSE TO WHAT REUTERS REPORTS AS A RESUMPTION OF BOMBING RAIDS ON ELF STRONGHOLDS IN ERITREA BY THE ETHIOPIAN AIR FORCE. RELIABLE SOURCES ARE QUOTED AS SAYING THAT MAI ATAL, 20 KMS FROM THE RED SEA PORT OF MASSAWA, WAS BOMBED FOR MORE THAN TWO HOURS. THE EPMG CONTINUES TO AIRLIFT TROOPS (ANOTHER 700 IN THE LAST TWO DAYS) TO ASMARA. THEIR FIGHTING CAPABILITY IS RATED LOW BY WESTERN MILITARY EXPERTS IN ADDIS ABABA. POWER SUPPLIES HAVE BEEN RESTORED TO ASMARA FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE FIGHTING BEGAN, BUT FUEL TO OPERATE THE EMERGENCY GENERATOR AT MAI NETI DAM IS RUNNING LOW.

UPI AND DAVID OTTAWAY OF THE WASHINGTON POST REPORT THE MASSACRE BY EPMG PARATROOPERS OF AS MANY AS 700 ERITREAN PRISONERS WHO WERE BELIEVED TO HAVE ESCAPED FROM A POLICE
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COMMANDO CAMP IN ASMARA. A SECOND GROUP OF 374 PRISONERS

WHO BROKE OUT OF A CAMP AT ADI QUALA, SOUTH OF ASMARA,
HAVE NOT BEEN INTERDICTED YET BUT ARE BEING SOUGHT BY
1,000 TROOPS. AN OFFICIAL INVESTIGATION HAS BEGUN TO

EXAMINE THESE ATROCITIES, THE WORST IN THE 13-YEAR SEPARA-
TIST REBELLION.

AMERICAN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR, VICE MINISTER MOHAMED HAMID
IBRAHIM, ACTING ON INSTRUCTIONS FROM FOREIGN MINISTER
KIFLE, PROTESTED FORMALLY AGAINST VOA BROADCAST OF EPMG'S
AMMUNITION RESUPPLY REQUEST. THE ETHIOPIAN CHARGE' IN
WASHINGTON WILL REPEAT THE PROTEST TO THE DEPARTMENT.
HAMID SAID FOREIGN MINISTER KIFLE FELT THE ANNOUNCEMENT
HAD "UNDERMINED OUR NEGOTIATIONS ON THIS MATTER" AND
STRONGLY URGED THERE BE NO FURTHER PREMATURE REVELATIONS.
EMBASSY ADDIS HAS REFRAINED FROM COMMENTING TO NEWSMEN.
MAW

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